

SHEEO president says strategic plan has right goals, right emphasis

Paul Lingenfelter, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), said an emphasis on achieving broader and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington should be the state's highest priority.

Lingenfelter, who as SHEEO president works to develop and sustain excellent systems of higher education in all 50 states, said the new Washington Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education has the right goals and right emphasis to achieve these objectives.

Lingenfelter made his presentation to the Board and its Advisory Council last Thursday, January 24, at The Evergreen State College in Olympia. The board meeting concluded on Friday, January 25.

Several key factors are driving the need for Washington and the United States to do a much better job educating their young people and under-educated adult workers, he said. Among these:

- Global change
- Educational progress abroad
- An aging U.S. population
- Constrained state, federal resources
- Changing demographics of U.S. population

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– Paul Lingenfelter

American and European workers are the most expensive in the world, he said. To be worth what they cost, these workers will have to be the best-educated in the world.

Two age groups in the U.S. are growing most rapidly: those who are 55+ and will be leaving the workforce, and those 6-24 who will be entering it. Those who are currently 25-54 will make up the bulk of the workforce for a long time.

Therefore, strategies to achieve higher levels of education among the working-age population of the United States will need to focus on both the younger group and the existing group of workers, he said.

Lingenfelter also provided perspective on two of the master plan's main objectives.

1. Accountability

“It's a shared responsibility; not a finger-pointing exercise. The challenge is to create a political culture where it works that way. It occurs at many levels: at the departmental level between colleagues; at the institutional level; and between faculty and students.

The effort needs to focus on a few priorities. You need to remember what you are trying to do – measure results – and respond to evidence in a real way. You have to design the entire system... early outreach, high quality teaching, curricula, student financial assistance, and predictable costs."

2. Improving performance

To improve overall levels of participation and degree attainment, many states are becoming more customer-service driven in their approach to recruiting and retaining students.

What causes students to drop out? With some it is financial; with others it is the way they are treated when they have an issue. Institutions are working hard on improving retention and graduation rates. *Making these issues a visible priority is really important.*

"There are three wrong ideas about higher education finance: 1) the only way we can improve is get more money in the system; 2) money is not the issue; and 3) it's easy to define the amount of money to do the job right. These are all wrong ideas."

"I'd like to substitute three *right* questions: 1) what do you need from the system; 2) what can you do better with the money you've already got (this deals with public skepticism); and 3) where can additional money on the margin really make the difference?"

"We have to be sales people and demonstrate that we care about this and we've made some hard decisions and another \$10 million for this *will* generate results... and here is the evidence."

Highlights of Lingenfelter's comments and presentation are available on the [January 2008](#) page of our Web site.

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction approved for Evergreen

The HECB approved a request by The Evergreen State College (TESC) to offer a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, beginning in the summer of 2008.

The proposed program primarily will serve practicing Thurston, Grays Harbor, Mason, and Lewis County teachers who seek a master's degree with a concentration in mathematics or English as a Second Language, or who wish to obtain endorsements in those subjects.

A TESC Master in Teaching (MIT) program offers those endorsements, but that program's target audience is prospective teachers while the new program's target audience is practicing teachers.

Unlike the MIT program, the M.Ed. program would not award a Residency Teaching Certificate, because almost all entering students would already have one. [Read more.](#)

Washington's economy may escape worst of forecasted U.S. recession in 2008

Chang Mook Sohn, executive director, Economic and Revenue Forecast Council, reported Washington might escape the worst effects of a forecasted U.S. recession in 2008, although state revenues will not grow at the record rate they have over the past three years.

Sohn said the U.S. economy is experiencing rapid and confusing changes that should produce slower economic growth this year.

Late in 2007, taxable sales in construction and construction-related

businesses in Washington dropped sharply due, in part, to problems associated with the sub-prime housing market. Sales in construction and construction-related business provide a good window on overall economic activity.

Washington's strong economic activity in software, foreign trade, agriculture, aerospace and health sciences should mitigate the effect of the national recession, Sohn said.

Washington's relative recession risk factors, Sohn noted, can be seen in the following table, which shows the status of key economic sector activity and influences during the last two recessions and at the end of 2007.

	1990	2000	2007
Aerospace	flat	flat	increasing
Software	n/a	flat	increasing
Dotcom	n/a	peak	growing
Construction	peak	peak	???
Dollar	stable	rising	falling
Non-Trans. Exports	falling	peak	rising
Population growth	strong	weak	moderate

[More.](#)

HECB, advisory council view preliminary master plan implementation schedule

Jim Reed, HECB planning and policy coordinator, provided a preliminary implementation schedule for the 2008 Strategic Master Plan. The plan outlines strategies to significantly increase the number of degrees attained in Washington by 2018.

The plan calls for a detailed enrollment plan to be completed prior to October 2009. The plan would recommend how to distribute increased enrollments throughout the public and private higher education systems; contain measurable

objectives for diversity participation; and specify increased enrollment in high-demand fields.

The HECB also will make recommendations about the physical, programmatic, and technological capacity needed to serve planned enrollments, and will prepare 10-year operating and capital cost estimates for implementing enrollment goals. [More.](#)

HECB hears report on 2009-11 fiscal priorities, 2008 supplemental budget

Pam Mead, who recently joined the HECB as director of fiscal policy, provided an update on 2009-11 fiscal priorities relating to implementation of the Strategic Master Plan.

Six priorities in the plan entail operating budget implications and may also entail facility and technological improvements to be addressed in capital budget requests:

- Raise the level of educational attainment
- Create higher expectations for K-12 students
- Create a system of support for lifelong learning
- Make college affordable and easy to access
- Promote economic growth and innovation
- Provide funding levels to ensure superior quality in Washington's higher education enterprise

Supplemental budget

Information on the Governor's 2008 supplemental budget for higher education also was provided at the meeting. [More.](#)

Board approves report recommending new formula for part-time SNG awards

The Board approved a report, prepared by HECB financial aid staff and a workgroup of financial aid administrators and stakeholders from all sectors, recommending a new formula for determining State Need Grant amounts for part-time students.

Part-time students have received, on average, less proportional SNG support than their full-time counterparts. The portion of tuition covered for full-time students ranges from 89 to 95 percent, while for part-time students it averages 45 to 80 percent.

Rather than award part-time aid on a credit-for-credit basis, the report recommends establishing a single award for each part-time enrollment category (e.g. students taking three, six, and nine credits). Options are:

- Providing an award based on tuition charged at the lowest credit level within each enrollment category.
- Providing an award based on the average of the tuition charges within each enrollment category (for half-time students this would mean averaging the tuition cost for six, seven, and eight credits).

The report will be sent to the Legislature for endorsement. [More.](#)

Ruckelshaus Center report

Lane Rawlins, former president of Washington State University and current director of the William D. Ruckelshaus Center, provided an update on various public policy initiatives and other developmental issues related to the center.

A joint public policy effort by Washington's two research universities,

the center is dedicated to collaborative problem solving in the state and Pacific Northwest. Its aim is to provide expertise that improves the availability and quality of voluntary collaborative approaches to policy development and multi-party dispute resolution.

[Click here](#) for a brief overview of the mission, activities and governance of the Ruckelshaus Center. More on the Board presentation can be found at the following [link](#).

UW, WSU to recruit new 'star' faculty to develop innovation research teams

A plan to implement the first phase of a long-term program to spur innovation research in Washington received approval by the Economic Development Commission at its January 10, 2008 meeting, Sam Smith reported.

The implementation plan developed by the HECB, University of Washington, and Washington State University, authorizes funding for two new 'star' researcher positions, one each at the UW and WSU.

The next step is for the HECB staff to develop a memorandum of agreement with the Commission to authorize the transfer of funds to the HECB for distribution to WSU and UW for these recruitments, Dr. Smith said.

WSU will begin immediately recruiting a researcher to work at the Tri-Cities campus on biofuels, and the UW has identified a researcher working the field of nanophotonics.

The EDC recognizes the need to increase funding for this program, but wants to ensure it has a well-developed business case and plan before going to the Legislature next session and seeking additional support, Dr. Smith said.

Therefore, the EDC will hire a consultant to work with the institutions and other stakeholders to further develop the implementation plan for the IRT program in the out-years, beginning in the 2009-11 biennium.

UW's eScience Institute sees dawn of revolutionary era in scientific discovery

Rapid advances in technology are transforming discovery in nearly all scientific fields in two important ways, Ron Johnson, vice president of academic technology at the University of Washington, told the Board at its January meeting.

First, massive experiments are being carried out by simulating the real world using computer systems with thousands of processors.

Second, large numbers of tiny but powerful sensors are being deployed to gather data on the sea floor, in the forest canopy, in gene sequencers, public infrastructure, and living organisms.

Unfortunately, many scientists – even the very best scientists – are not well-versed in these new computational techniques.

Consequently, the UW has developed the eScience Institute Initiative to make the university a leader in advancing the technology and tools that help scientists with their data problems.



eScience marries computer science with other fields of science and engineering. Advanced visualization is one key component of eScience.

Johnson said the initiative is being launched with a focus on the environmental sciences – specifically the NEPTUNE project, a regional cabled observatory located on the Juan de Fuca plate off the coast of Washington.

NEPTUNE will place thousands of physical, chemical, geological, and biological sensors on 2,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable on the sea floor, continuously streaming enormous volumes of data back to shore for analysis, Johnson said. [More.](#)

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